



# THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

## Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

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April, 2014

Editor, Theresa Graham

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - SPRING 2014

I'm hoping this message finds all of you in good health and birdy spirits. It's been a very cold winter so far, but the up side is there have been numerous sightings of some wintering species that we don't often get to look at. There have been more White-winged Scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, and Red-breasted Mergansers this winter than I can ever remember having in Tennessee. Unfortunately though, no Snowy Owl!

The Sandhill Crane Festival was well attended, and despite there not being enough food to hold many birds on the refuge itself during the festival, the people attending the event seemed to be pleased overall. I was told there were 30,000 cranes in the immediate area, along with 8-10 Whooping Cranes. TWRA told me that next year they will try a few different methods to ensure there is enough food to last through November and December and into January, so maybe there will be more viewable cranes on the refuge for festival participants.

Our annual spring meeting this year is being hosted by the Chattanooga chapter on May 2-4. Please consider attending. The field trips will be interesting, with migrating warblers and other species returning from wintering grounds. For details about the state meeting see elsewhere in this newsletter. You can also go to the TOS website at [www.tnbirds.org](http://www.tnbirds.org). Our business meeting will be starting early Saturday afternoon, and we have plenty on our agenda to discuss. I encourage as many chapter directors as possible to attend. Participation by directors seems to be waning in recent years. This means that any future decisions and/or changes for our organization are left in fewer and fewer hands, and that's probably never a good thing. Among other things, we will be discussing our new TOS logo, TOS possibly providing funds for a tracking device for Golden Eagles, another TN Breeding Bird Atlas project (or some version thereof), the Tennessee Bird Records Committee upgrading and possibly starting a summer bird count for breeding birds. We have several more issues on our plate and will need to talk these items over at length and then vote on them. Please note that the general membership meeting will immediately follow the board-of-directors meeting this year. Usually the general membership meeting follows the banquet and precedes the evening speaker, but this year the sequence is different.

Citizen science remains at the forefront of what TOS does. Your participation in bird counts helps to continue to build the data base on our Tennessee birds. Aerial insectivores (swallows and swifts primarily) are starting to show alarming declines. Having hard data is one of the best tools that can be used to try to initiate meaningful legislation to help mitigate human effects on bird populations that are in trouble and/or declining. Keeping a watchful eye on our more common species is as important as finding rarities. As the future unfolds, we are going to be continually challenged by electronic media for our personal time. Get out there and enjoy our avian jewels. And consider recording what you see on Cornell's eBird site. It's very easy to use. Then that data is permanently recorded for future research use.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ron Hoff  
President -Tennessee Ornithological Society

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**2014 TOS ANNUAL STATE MEETING****Chattanooga, May 2-4, 2014**

The TOS Annual Meeting will be held in Chattanooga on May 2-4, 2014. Registration will be Friday, May 2, from 6 to 9 PM EDT, at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 3710 Modern Industries Parkway, Chattanooga, TN 37409 (Exit #174 on I-24, near the foot of Lookout Mountain). Registration fees are \$15.00 per person.

A discounted rate of \$89.95 plus tax for a King or Double Queen accommodation will be offered until April 1, 2014, as long as the rooms are available. The hotel provides a free 6AM hot breakfast buffet. We know this is a busy weekend in Chattanooga, so book early. Call the hotel direct number, 423-424-0125, and ask for the "TOS Chattanooga Chapter" rate.

Saturday evening will feature a two hour cruise on the Tennessee Aquarium's River Gorge Explorer, a water-jet propelled, hydrofoil-assisted vessel which will transit at high speed to reach a viewing area and then cruise at lower speed for birding and observation. The cruise will be interpreted by John Dever, Lead Interpreter, and Kevin Calhoun, the Tennessee Aquarium's Assistant Curator of Forests. Heavy hors d' oeuvres will be served during the low-speed observation time. The cost is \$39.00 per person.

The Saturday and Sunday morning field trips will leave from the Holiday Inn Express. We'll go to some of our favorite birding sites: The Chattanooga Nature Center and Arboretum, The Craven's House on Lookout Mountain, Standifer Gap Marsh, and others. The Saturday afternoon business meeting and general meeting will be held at the Country Inns & Suites located across from the Holiday Inn Express.

For more information, email Gary Lanham, CTOS Treasurer, at [GLANHAM@epbfi.com](mailto:GLANHAM@epbfi.com).

Send registration and cruise payments to CTOS:

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**2014 TOS Annual Meeting Registration Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

TOS Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Office held? \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Registrations at \$15.00 each.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Cruise reservations at \$39.00 each.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed. Make check payable to CTOS.

Mail registration form and check to:

Gary Lanham CTOS  
21 Cool Springs Road  
Signal Mountain, TN 37377

### Reports from TOS Committee Chairmen and Vice-Presidents

I would like to see a report from your committee to be presented or read at the spring state meeting in Chattanooga. If you can write up a report and send it to me or the TOS secretary ([routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net)), I would very much appreciate it. I encourage all of you to attend the meeting if possible.

Respectfully,  
Ron Hoff, TOS President

### 2014 TOS FALL MEETING & SYMPOSIUM AT MANCHESTER, TENNESSEE October 3-5, 2014

The Tennessee Ornithological Society's 2014 Fall Meeting and Symposium will be held in Manchester, TN on October 3-5. The Highland Rim Chapter will host the meeting and extends a cordial invitation to all TOS members. Events include the annual symposium, a board of directors meeting and field trips.

The Ambassador Inn and Luxury Suites at 925 Interstate Drive (I-24 Exit 110) will be the headquarters for the event. For reservations, call 931-728-2200 or 800-237-9228 or [ambassador@schattenproperties.com](mailto:ambassador@schattenproperties.com). A block of rooms are being held for TOS and the special room rate is \$45 plus tax. There is a complimentary breakfast provided by the Ambassador from 5:30 to 9:30 a.m.

The Ambassador Inn is reached by taking Interstate 24 to Exit 110 (Route 53—Manchester and Woodbury). After exiting, go North to Interstate Drive; the Ambassador sign will be visible on the right. The Inn is within walking distance of Cracker Barrel, Oak Restaurant and quick markets/service stations. A Waffle House and two Mexican Restaurants are nearby.

#### The Annual Symposium

The Annual Symposium will feature invited and submitted talks. A formal call for papers will be issued soon. Meanwhile, if you are interested in making a presentation, please contact Ron Hoff at [aves7000@bellsouth.net](mailto:aves7000@bellsouth.net).

#### Field Trips

Field trips will be held Saturday and Sunday mornings and depart from the Ambassador Inn. Details of the field trips will be posted on the TOS web site.

#### Board of Directors Meeting

The TOS Board of Directors will meet Saturday afternoon.

#### Registration

The registration fee is \$10. Pre-payment is encouraged although attendees may pay upon arrival. Registration will be from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. on Friday, October 3, at the Ambassador Inn Conference Building. Send a check made out to Highland Rim Chapter/TOS to: Vida Sherwood, 1326 Harton Blvd., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

For additional information on the meeting, contact Joyce P. Adams, 676 Wilkerson Lane, Winchester, TN 37398 (931-962-0280/cell 931-636-1837) at [gdajpa@comcast.net](mailto:gdajpa@comcast.net).

## TOS WINTER MEETING

By: Cyndi Routledge

Twenty-four folks braved the cloudy skies and chilly temperatures February 7-9, 2014 and attended the TOS Winter meeting at Pickwick State Park in Hardin County. The total species list came in at 92 species for both days. Two evenings of good fellowship and yummy snacks were shared Friday and Saturday nights at the Pickwick Lodge.

Some of the birding highlights were: **White-winged Scoter** – at least 10 in the area. **Red-throated Loon** – a group of 5 were found at Bruton Branch recreation area, just before everyone left to go home on Sunday around lunchtime. **Golden Eagle** – a beautiful adult landed briefly about 60 feet away from us at Bruton Branch, and if that wasn't wonderful enough, about 30 minutes later it swooped in and attacked an American Coot in the embayment as we stood there scoping the lake for other species of waterfowl. The coot escaped the lunch menu, and the eagle got thoroughly soaked in the process and flew up to a near by tree to dry his wings. We left him sitting there as we drove off for lunch. A **Laughing Gull** was amazingly located below the dam Saturday, amongst the thousands of gulls there. One **Virginia Rail** was heard at a cattail marsh in the bottoms. A **Short-eared Owl** was seen very well Saturday evening flying back and forth for us in search of his dinner at dusk also in the bottoms. Other birds of note also found at the bottoms were **Gray Catbird**, **Vesper Sparrow**, **Fox Sparrow** and a large group of **Rusty Blackbirds**.

A huge thank you to those who had a hand in the planning of this great weekend and also to those who participated. It was a fun time of birding with new & old friends.





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..... **CHRISTMAS COUNT DATA DUE** .....

Christmas count data are due as soon as possible to allow me to get my report in to the editor of *The Migrant*. Besides the actual count data, please be sure to include the effort data below:

1. Hours and miles by car, foot, and any nightbirding
2. Number of observers and parties
3. Any feeder watching hours & names
4. Start and end times for the count
5. Weather data for the count
6. Names of all the participants

If you do not have a local compiler, you can send the data directly to me at the address/email below.

TOS appreciates your efforts to record and track our bird populations and abundance. Thanks for helping us to archive this data for future generations and researchers.

Ron Hoff • TOS State Count Compiler  
282 Hackworth Ln. • Clinton, TN 37716 • 865-435-4547  
[aves7000@bellsouth.net](mailto:aves7000@bellsouth.net)

### Spring Bird Count Compilation Change

It has been brought to my attention that having two spring count compilations published in our journal, *The Migrant*, is no longer necessary. Nothing is specifically being done with the data from that one day count on a national level, as was originally proposed. For future spring bird count compilations, there will only be one (1) report in our journal instead of two (2).

If the count compilers want to keep that name for their count, that's completely fine. If compilers want to keep their count on that same day (the second Saturday in May), that's also fine. If compilers want to change the date of their count to a possibly more advantageous date, that's also fine. The ONLY thing that is changing in my report to *The Migrant* is there will one report instead of two. In my case here in Anderson County, the count becomes the Anderson County spring count instead of the Anderson Co. NAMC.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Ron Hoff • TOS State Bird Count Compiler  
282 Hackworth Ln. • Clinton, TN 37716 • 865-435-4547  
[aves7000@bellsouth.net](mailto:aves7000@bellsouth.net)

## **Guidelines for Tennessee Ornithological Society 2014 Conservation and Research Grants**

The Tennessee Ornithological Society invites applications for Conservation and Research Grants to support projects that will directly or indirectly help to protect the birds of Tennessee, increase scientific knowledge or educate others about the importance of Tennessee's birds. A total of \$3,000 is available to be awarded for the grants, which may be divided among multiple recipients.

Anyone with a bird-related project, including students, professionals, and individual workers, may compete for a grant. The project may already be in progress at the time of application. Applicants should submit a project proposal using the form that is available on the TOS Website ([www.TNBIRDS.org](http://www.TNBIRDS.org)). Needed information includes: name, address, telephone, E-mail address, topic, problem to be addressed, objectives, expected results and significance, project location, beginning and ending dates, estimated field time, estimated total cost of project, itemized budget, funds available from other sources, how grant is to be used, experience of applicant in the project area, willingness of applicant to share results at a statewide TOS meeting, and whether the work is under the guidance of a mentor or is independent.

A letter of recommendation from a mentor or a knowledgeable associate is strongly encouraged. Up to \$50 of a grant may be applied toward the costs of attending an appropriate scientific meeting to present results of the project.

Criteria for judging applications include:

- Significance of problem addressed
- Clarity of proposal
- Adequacy of project design
- Adequacy of experience/training
- Adequacy of professional guidance
- Financial need
- Chance for achieving objectives
- Potential benefit to the species/resource
- Potential for advancing career/studies
- Potential for sharing results at a future statewide TOS meeting

The application and letter of recommendation should be emailed (preferably) or mailed to Michael Collins, Department of Biology, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN 38112; [collinsm@rhodes.edu](mailto:collinsm@rhodes.edu); (901) 843-3557. The deadline for receipt of applications is April 30. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decisions in mid-May. A check for 60 percent (60%) of the amount awarded will be mailed to the grantee(s) upon approval of award(s). The balance of each award will be paid after the project leader submits a satisfactory progress report with itemized costs and receipts to the Committee Chair, Michael Collins. All grant awards will be announced in *The Tennessee Warbler*.

Respectfully,

Michael Collins

TOS Conservation and Research Funding Committee Chair

**APPLICATION FOR CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH FUND GRANT**

## Tennessee Ornithological Society

Instructions: Complete and submit to Michael Collins by email (preferably) to [collinsm@rhodes.edu](mailto:collinsm@rhodes.edu) or by mail to Department of Biology, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN 38112 (901) 843-3557. Attach any additional information.

Name: Address:	Email: Telephone: FAX:
Topic:	
Problem to be Addressed and Why Important:	
Objectives:	
Project Location:	
Beginning and Ending Dates (including prior work)  Estimated Project Time (Hours):	
Estimated Total Cost: \$_____ (Attach budget)  Anticipated Additional Funding Sources and Amounts:	
How is the grant to fully or partially fund the project?	
How will this grant help with research or conservation of birds in Tennessee?	
Are you willing to present the findings at a statewide TOS meeting:	

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Vogt Receives President's Volunteer Service Award

David Vogt, a Nashville native and long-time Chattanooga resident, recently received both regional and national recognition by the USDA Forest Service. David was recognized by Southern Region, Regional Forester Elizabeth Agpaoa, as recipient of the 2013 Individual Volunteer Honor Award. In addition, David also accepted a Presidential Volunteer Service Award, given to individuals or groups who have demonstrated outstanding volunteer service and civic participation over an extended period. David was honored for the establishment and operations of a permanent fall migrant bird banding station located on the Tellico Ranger District of the Cherokee National Forest. Over the past 15 years, David has led over 30 volunteers from at least five states and banded nearly 12,000 migratory birds.

The Forest Service mission includes monitoring and management of songbirds, especially neotropical migratory birds suffering regional and national declines. In recent history the agency established a monitoring regimen for this important species group and has assumed a significant role in the international Partners in Flight initiative. While many studies focus on life stages that are relatively easy to monitor, such as breeding and wintering, migration is a critical life stage for songbirds. Monitoring programs help establish the significance of large, continuous blocks of forested landscape during the migration period.

David, who has nearly 27 years of banding experience, is a Master Bander licensed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He approached the Cherokee National Forest in 1997 with an interest in establishing a permanent banding station within the Forest. Working with forest wildlife biologists, David selected Whigg Meadow, located on the Tellico Ranger District at an elevation of 5,000 feet above sea level. This location was selected due to its prominent topographic position on the landscape, the likelihood of capturing abundant fall migrants, and co-location with other permanent National Forest bird monitoring stations.

David began banding migrant birds at the Tellico location in 1998, and has operated his banding station in September of each year. During that time, he and supporting volunteers banded nearly 50 bird species ranging from 20 species of warblers to vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, thrushes, and several birds of prey. He logged over 12,000 actual net hours during the course of the project. Including travel time, preparation time, and data entry time, David alone has donated over 415 calendar days of volunteer work since 1998. He has recruited over 500 additional volunteer bander work days. Many banders travel from out of state to work with David. Volunteers have logged about 1,000 hours of volunteer time annually.

Recaptures of banded birds reveal significant information on bird life history, travel routes, longevity and habitat use. The study revealed new information about the Tennessee Warbler, sometimes known as the "Coffee Warbler". This species nests in the boreal forests of Canada, only passing through Tennessee and crossing the Gulf of Mexico during its migration to wintering grounds in Columbia's coffee region. Fourteen Tennessee Warblers which were captured, banded and released on the Tellico Ranger District were recaptured in subsequent years, sometimes within the same net. This work resulted in a 2012 publication in the *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*, which documented songbird migration "stopover site" fidelity for this species.

David's volunteer efforts contribute directly to supporting the US Forest Service 'Southern Region Neotropical Migrant and Resident Landbird Conservation Strategy. His data will help provide an understanding of the status and trends of the species occurring in the region. David is an outstanding, generous and exemplary volunteer who deserves special recognition for furthering Cherokee National Forest monitoring initiatives. His donation of time and years of expertise make him an invaluable asset to the Forest Service Southern Region."

During his career, David has also made additional volunteer contributions including assistance with metro parks in Nashville, and conducted other monitoring work for the Tennessee Ornithological Society. He has also provided illustrations for multiple publications, including the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Tennessee*.

Submitted by: Laura M. Lewis, Natural Resource Specialist, Cherokee National Forest



## The Migrant

*The Migrant* is the work of every member of TOS, even if you provide only the financial support of yearly dues. But if you've ever participated in a state count or CBC, ever turned in a sighting to a Seasons compiler, or, best of all, ever written a note or article to be published you have been an active participant in creating *The Migrant*. Without the continued help of every member the journal could not exist. As you receive your issues over the coming months take a moment to consider writing a Round Table note, or perhaps an article on the birds of your favorite birding place. You don't have to be a scientist to do this; all it takes is a love of birding and a willingness to take the time to do it!

If you'd like to try your hand at writing an article but don't have a subject in mind please contact us – we have a list and will be happy to help you get started!

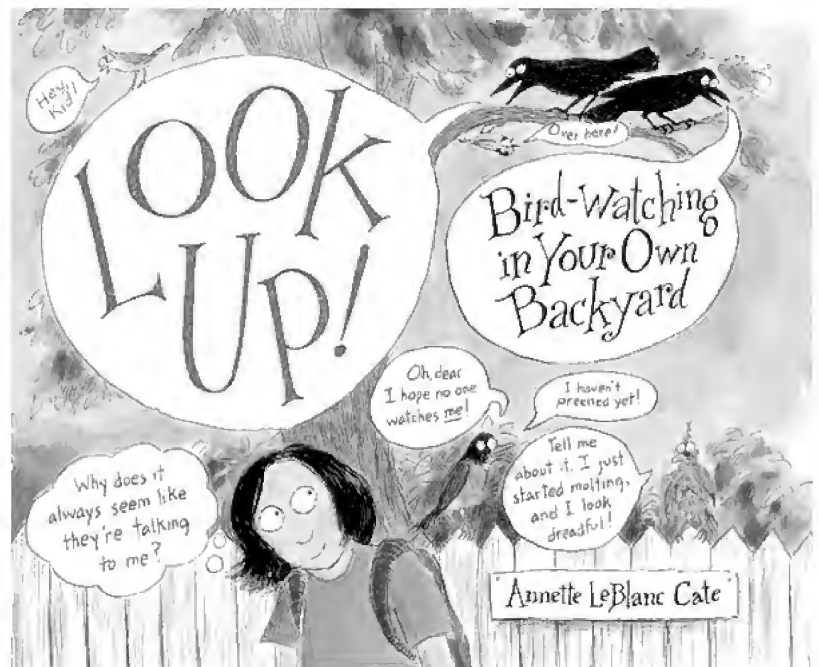
Martha Waldron [martha.waldron@gmail.com](mailto:martha.waldron@gmail.com) and Susan McWhirter [snmcwhirter@gmail.com](mailto:snmcwhirter@gmail.com), co-editors, *The Migrant*

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## Great New Bird-Watching Book for Kids!

By: Cyndi Routledge

New Nashville Tennessee Ornithological member and retired Librarian, Carole Prendergast, recently emailed me with a wonderful recommendation for a book for young birders. *Look Up! Bird-Watching in Your Own Backyard* written by Annette LeBlanc Cate. A 2014 Robert F. Sibert Honor Book, this "conversational, humorous introduction to bird-watching encourages kids to get outdoors with a sketchbook and really look around. Quirky full-color illustrations portray dozens of birds chatting about their distinctive characteristics, including color, shape, plumage, and beak and foot types, while tongue-in-cheek cartoons feature banter between birds, characters, and the reader. Interactive and enjoyable tips bring an age-old hobby to new life for the next generation of bird-watchers."



What a wonderful find, and the timing couldn't be any better as this book will be a fabulous compliment to our own *Discover Birds Activity* book and our ongoing efforts to introduce Tennessee students to the wonderful world of birds.

For information on how you can introduce students to birds and birding in your town please contact me at [routledges@bellsouth.net](mailto:routledges@bellsouth.net). It's easy, it's fun and you'll make a lasting impact on the youth in your community.

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## CHAPTER NEWS

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**KNOXVILLE** - Dr. Dave Unger, an Associate Professor at Maryville College, presented at our November meeting. He teaches various classes in biology, wildlife, and ornithology. His presentation was titled, "Why Birds Rock!" He gave a very interesting talk on "why birds are amazing." He also spoke about the decline of certain species due to loss of habitat and urban sprawl. Go to this link <http://www.youtube.com/user/MCBBiology> to view a video of his students on a field trip to Merritt Island in Florida, "Florida Ornithology Trip," plus many other videos.

Bob Howdeshell gave a wonderful presentation on bird photography at our December meeting. Bob is a three-time Audubon Great Backyard Bird Count Award winner, including two "Overall Winner" photographs. He has been published in the quarterly *Audubon* magazine, as well as the *National Wildlife Federation* magazine. Bob illustrated the right and wrong ways to photograph birds. He also provided tips for those looking to take quality diagnostic bird images, or maybe that special image that becomes a wall hanger.

Our annual member photo share meeting happened on January 8, 2014, with 12 members showing pictures from all over the world including a few from our own backyards.

Bill Reeves, Chief of Biodiversity with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, spoke at our February meeting. He spoke about the TWRA organizational structure, funding sources and how funding is spent.

On November 9, 2013, Tom Howe, led a group of KTOS Members and Discover Birds volunteers along with ten members of the Webelos Pack 73 from Norris, Tennessee on a bird field trip at Cove Lake State Park in Caryville, Tennessee. Binoculars were provided and Tom gave a lesson on the habitat and the birds you may expect to find in each area. The Webelos den received enough Discover Birds Activity Books for all of the den members.

On November 21, 2013, KTOS volunteers presented the Discover Birds program to 30 children and adults from Blount Home Education Association. The program was presented at Ijams Nature Center and naturalist Lyn Bales presented the center's Red-shouldered Hawk which was a big hit with both children and adults.

Two of our members had articles published in the January-February issue of *The Tennessee Conservationist* magazine. Vickie Henderson authored, "Helping Tennessee Students Discover Birds", describing the activities of the Discover Birds Program. Stephen Lyn Bales authored "Remembering Nancy Tanner and the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, 1941" in memory of long-time member, Nancy Tanner.

A few KTOS members will be going on a 10 day field trip, France KTOS Charity Tour, starting on May 20. There are still 2 spaces available for this tour. The proceeds from this tour will benefit the KTOS. For more details visit: <http://birdingecotours.co.za>.

Karen Wilkinson, KTOS Secretary

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Eight thousand and counting! **MEMPHIS** TOS marked the arrival of 2014 with eBird entry number 8,000. Collection of this data began ninety years ago this year by chapter founder Ben Coffey.

Continuing our tradition of interesting and informative monthly programs, member Sheila Bentley treated us to the birds of South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. Dick Preston presented a program on the Black-necked Stilts which have nested at the pits since first being spotted with young in 1982. We also received a concise guide to birding north Mississippi from Dr. Jason Hoeksema, U of MS. Our February program featured Ron Hoff's Colorado trip in search of grouse and other specialties.

Recent field trips included Shelby Farms and also T.O. Fuller State Park, where progress is being made on restoration of a former golf course to natural habitat. That was followed by a brief trip around the pits, Riverport Road, and TVA and Robco Lakes. Knox Martin led our annual February trip to Reelfoot. Ten members enjoyed birding and fellowship with other TOS folks at the winter birding weekend at Pickwick.

Memphis members conducted 5 annual Christmas Bird Counts: Memphis, Fayette County, Wapanocca/Shelby Forest, and Moon Lake and Arkabutla in Mississippi. Notables included LeConte's Sparrow, House Wren (Memphis), Sedge Wren and Short-eared Owl

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## CHAPTER NEWS

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### Memphis - Continued from page 10

(Fayette), and an American Tree Sparrow (Wapanocca). Arkabutla produced record numbers of Bald Eagles (8) and Wilson's Snipe (135). The female Long-tailed Duck was spotted on TVA Lake during the Memphis count week.

Several folks ventured south to assist MissBirders with the Sardis Lake CBC and Strawberry Plains Audubon with their annual winter count. Sardis CBC highlights were White-winged Scoter and a Lesser Black-backed Gull. Le Conte's Sparrow and Nashville Warbler turned up at Strawberry Plains.

Others have taken advantage of bird identification workshops and field trip opportunities presented by Strawberry Plains Audubon and Delta Wind Birds, a new nonprofit organization dedicated to habitat restoration for migratory shorebirds using the north Mississippi Delta.

Following a long battle with heart disease, MTOS member Silvia Wortham passed away during the holidays. Despite her serious illness, Silvia, was a dedicated member since 2003 with a positive and upbeat spirit. She will be missed.

Info on upcoming monthly speakers and field trips may be found on TNbirds or at <http://www.tnbirds.org/chapters/Memphis/Memphis.htm>

Gaynell Perry, President

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**NASHVILLE** (NTOS) Chapter members were busy these last few months. In December we participated in the Adventure Science Center's Twelve Days of Science. Thanks to Susan Hollyday and Chloe Walker for the educational displays and their willingness to share a little bit about NTOS and birding to the general public. The following month NTOS received a little more media attention when Chris Sloan and Chloe teamed up to do a radio interview with WTN here in Nashville regarding bird feeding and birding in general. Cyndi Routledge, Polly Rooker, LinnAnn Welch, Melinda Welton and others have also done presentations to local garden clubs, church groups and schools. We also plan to participate in the upcoming Bell's Bend Spring Festival in April. Earl Henry, Jr. is spearheading that venture.

NTOS has also recently voted to allocate funds to help Radnor Lake supporters buy woodlands adjacent to the existing park. Anyone who has visited Radnor can appreciate the advantages of preserving and expanding on this natural gem. For those interested, we are excited once again to offer our spring Radnor walks during the last three Wednesdays in April and the first three Wednesdays in May. As usual, all birders are welcome! Funds were also allocated to purchase Discovery Books to be distributed to local elementary classrooms. Interest continues to grow as an on-line version is available through the TOS website under "Education". Ordering information and downloadable PDF files can be found here. The ultimate goal remains to distribute these books to every third grader in the state.

Still in its infancy stages, several conservation and environmental groups are engaging in the preservation and/or construction of chimney swift roosts. NTOS hopes to be involved in some capacity in the construction of chimney swift towers with Bell's Bend being considered among other places as possible tower locations. While there is still much to be discussed and decided, reviving the TOS chimney swift projects of yesteryear is a wonderful tribute to those TOS members involved with the chimney swifts in the past.

Finally, after the TOS Spring Meeting in Chattanooga, we will be gearing up for the TOS 100 Year Anniversary in 2015 at Montgomery Bell State Park near Dickson. Be watching for announcements as we will try to keep everyone current on the plans. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Steve Routledge, President

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**STEPHEN M. RUSSELL CHAPTER** - Members of the Bristol Bird Club braved cold weather on three field trips in early 2014. The first trip was to Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge where 36 species were identified including 1000+ Sandhill Cranes. Twenty-nine species were found on a trip to Burke's Garden in Virginia on February 8. Golden Eagles, which are usually found on this annual trip, were missing that day. Recently a walk along part of the Greenbelt in Kingsport, TN, resulted in 30 species being identified.



## CHAPTER NEWS

Bristol - Continued from page 11

The severe weather causing the freezing of northern lakes has resulted in some waterfowl not commonly wintering here being found in our local lakes. Included in these reports are White-winged Scoter, Common Merganser, Northern Pintail Ducks, and Long-tailed Ducks. Members have been kept busy following up on reported finds.

Vice President John Moyle presented an interesting slide program on a trip to Alaska at our February meeting. Our club sponsored a mile plus of Operation Migration 2013-2014.

Lois Cox, President

### Chicken Hunting in Colorado: Feathers, Friends, and Fun

Those in attendance at the Memphis Chapter TOS February meeting were treated to an excellent program presented by state president Ron Hoff. To say that Ron's cleverly titled presentation, "Chicken Hunting in Colorado: Feathers, Friends, and Fun" was well received would be understatement. Ron not only chronicled their April 2013 trip, but took his audience (all 50+ individuals) along with him, wife Dollyann, and members Martha Waldron and Susan McWhirter to relive their trek to the Centennial State in search of specialties including the newly recognized species, Gunnison Sage Grouse. Woven among breathtaking slides of birds and scenery were Ron's tips on using eBird to plan a trip, detailed information about viewing birds on a lek, and lively demonstrations of the male Sage Grouse's unique courtship displays and vocalizations. The trip finale included a fun reunion with another chapter member Dianne Poore, now living in Colorado Springs. During the mixer following the business session, Ron and Dollyann greeted folks, shared more stories, and answered all manner of questions.

Thank you, Ron, for a delightful evening!

Gaynell Perry  
Memphis, TN

### Bluebird Fact Sheet Available From MTOS Member

David Hill is making available to all interested members a PDF file of a very detailed Bluebird Fact Sheet he has created. You may obtain a copy by emailing David at [hill@att.net](mailto:hill@att.net) and entering "Bluebird" in the subject line, and he will send you the file.

### Collisions with Glass: An Avoidable Problem

Collisions with glass and buildings kill up to one billion birds annually.

Virtually every home in the United States kills several birds a year, adding up to a colossal loss of life. The good news is that there is a simple, inexpensive, and long-lasting solution for window exteriors: ABC BirdTape. The product has received rave reviews from those who have tried it.

"When an overwintering Hermit Thrush was killed after colliding with the glass of my back door last year, I knew it was time to act," said ABC's Clare Nielsen. "ABC BirdTape was easy to apply, and I'm pleased to report that I have had no bird strikes since."

Christine Sheppard, ABC's Bird Collisions Campaign Manager, points out: "In a series of independent tests, ¾-inch BirdTape installed in a pattern of vertical lines spaced four inches apart was found to deter most bird collisions."

Purchase ABC BirdTape: <http://www.abcbirdtape.org/>

### June 30th Deadline

The deadline date for the August issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is June 30th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

### Submit Material To:

Theresa Graham, Editor  
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## **OPERATION MIGRATION 2013-2014**

This migration from October 2, 2013 to January 6, 2014 consumed 96 days. The eight Whooping Crane chicks were safely delivered to St. Marks Wildlife Refuge, Florida after an erratic 1101 mile safari. After health checks and transmitter attachments the chicks were released into the wild to begin their new lives as wild birds. Brooke Pennypacker, OM's Pilot, checks on the chicks twice daily until they voluntarily leave their home on migration north to Wisconsin.

It has to be emphasized that this migration was difficult. Joe Duff opines that the team paid a high toll on this migration due to eleven and twelve down days in a row and only a few consecutive flying days. The team was one day short of the longest migration ever. It was by far the coldest one experienced yet with unremitting, depressing subzero temperatures.

The migration continued its erratic starts with long stops experienced in Wisconsin. Then it took nearly six weeks to travel through Illinois. Imagine the 106 miles through Tennessee taking 13 days (on average, a 2 day flight, at the most). Right to the end the atrocious weather prevailed.

Many times the weather tricked the team. They would wait a week for the right wind only to have it snatched away by fog or low ceilings.

Originally there was the potential to arrive at St. Marks on New Year's Day. No go! Three days later 1500 people showed up for a "certain" flight day only to be disappointed when the air was too trashy to launch a flight. Finally, on January 6, 2014, only 70 people witnessed the arrival and flyover of the chicks at St. Marks after a 28 mile flight!

The migration was best described as days of frustration waiting for the weather to improve, punctuated by overwork and high stress when the weather finally cooperated. Initial training and imprinting required early mornings and long days. It was a big commitment in time and energy. From June onwards the team, usually 9 people, lived in motor homes and trained or maintained the birds at sunrise. Team members have to get along in tight quarters, plus eat on odd schedules, usually in the cold.

The host families along the migration route at stop-overs made the migration possible by opening up their homes, their isolated fields and their hearts to the team and the very special young cranes. The generosity and hospitality of the hosts was unmatched. The migration would not be possible without their help.

About the time you read this, in early April, the cranes will spiral skywards, catch a south wind and head back to Wisconsin. Maybe along the path followed on their journey south. And so the cycle continues.

In conclusion, the budget for 2013-2014 was set at \$257,000.00. Thanks to hundreds of crane lovers over \$275,000.00 was contributed. The 2014 budget is being prepared now. Thank you to all who contributed. Remember that it is never too late to become a Milemaker!

Bird On!

Tony King, Certified Craniac  
865-988-6172

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## CONSERVATION POLICY COMMITTEE

Recommended by the committee, TOS President Ron Hoff sent a letter to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Board of Directors, urging TVA to reduce reliance on carbon-based fuels by increasing investments for research and development of renewable energy sources.

Recommended by the committee, President Hoff signed on to a letter from the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, urging the Secretary to pursue aggressive policies to protect public lands and wildlife from feral cats. This is part of ABC's Cat's Indoors program. Recent studies by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimate domestic cats kill 2.4 billion birds and 12.3 billion mammals every year (yes, billion). Feral cats account for 70% of the birds and 90% of the mammals killed. ABC also advocates against Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) programs. TOS is a member of ABC.

Neonicotinoids are a class of insecticides widely used in the United States (and around the world). In March of 2013 ABC released a review of 200 studies on the effects of these chemicals on birds, aquatic invertebrates and other wildlife. Some evidence also shows a connection between these chemicals and honeybee colony collapse disorder. TOS President Ron Hoff signed on to a letter from ABC to the Environmental Protection Agency calling for a ban on the use of neonicotinoids in treating seeds.

In 2010 The State of Tennessee petitioned the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) to place the ridge tops of state land in the North Cumberland Wildlife Area off limits to surface coal mining. These ridges are the breeding grounds for nearly one third of all surviving Cerulean Warblers. The Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) has joined the petition with the state on behalf of a number of conservation organizations, including TOS. OSM expects to have a project manager in place this year. Once a manager is appointed it will take 11 months for OSM to issue a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), an additional 11 months to issue the final EIS and 24 months to make a final determination. The committee will continue to follow this issue.

Dick Preston  
Co-Chair

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## Bald Eagle Die-off in Utah Due to West Nile Virus

In December 2013, Bald Eagles wintering around Utah's Great Salt Lake began to die mysteriously. Now laboratory tests by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) have implicated West Nile Virus in the deaths. More than 40 eagles have died in Utah since this outbreak began, and others are still being treated at local rehabilitation centers.

The DWR has confirmed that the eagles contracted West Nile after preying on infected Eared Grebes that had already succumbed to the virus. This marks the first time that Eared Grebes have been known to contract the virus.

About 750 to 1,200 Bald Eagles winter in Utah each year, remaining until March. The spread of the infection appears to be slowing, so wildlife officials hope that the number of eagle deaths should start to decrease.

## **Company Tied to Eagle Deaths Agrees to Million-Dollar Fine: First Prosecution of Its Kind**

The owner of a pair of eagle-killing wind facilities in Wyoming has agreed to pay a million-dollar fine and launch new bird-protection programs after pleading guilty to numerous violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The agreement, announced by the U.S. Department of Justice, marks the first federal prosecution of a wind energy company accused of killing birds.

Duke Energy Renewables was charged with multiple felonies in connection with the deaths of 14 Golden Eagles and 149 other protected birds, including hawks, blackbirds, larks, wrens, and sparrows, at the “Campbell Hill” and “Top of the World” wind projects in Converse County, Wyo., between 2009 and 2013. The two projects, both on agricultural lands, are powered by a total of 176 large wind turbines. ABC has called repeatedly for federal investigations of wind power facilities built in migratory pathways or near birds protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Several such investigations are now underway, but so far only one—the Duke Energy probe—has led to federal charges.

“We welcome this settlement. It’s about time,” said Michael Hutchins, Coordinator of ABC’s National Bird-Smart Wind Energy Program. “All wind projects kill some birds—that’s unavoidable—but it’s long been clear that some facilities are much worse than the others.”

“Wind energy cannot be considered ‘green’ if projects like this one are killing so many birds,” said George Fenwick, President of ABC. “I’m afraid the flagrant violations of the law seen in this case are widespread.” ABC and other groups have long complained about the voluntary nature of federal bird collision regulations, arguing that these rules have allowed wind power companies to build in sensitive habitats and hide bird kill problems from the government and the public.

“The bird kills that led to the million-dollar fine were self-reported by Duke Energy Renewables,” said ABC’s Hutchins. “Unhappily, that could make wind power companies even less inclined to voluntarily report bird kills that they already are. It could also tempt these companies to ‘dig more holes in the back forty,’ in an active effort to hide the carcasses of birds killed by their turbines.”

ABC has developed a wind power risk assessment map that makes it easier for regulators, private citizens, and wind power developers to gauge the threat that individual wind power facilities pose to migratory and endangered birds. The map is not intended to take the place of site-specific risks assessment processes, but it does suggest that both of the Wyoming plants were poorly sited.

ABC’s Bird-Smart Wind Energy Program is generously supported by the Leon Levy Foundation.

See the Wind Development Bird Risk Map: <http://www.abcbirds.org/extra/windmap.html>



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